

**IN THE CLAIMS:**

1. (currently amended) A middle ear prosthesis comprising:  
2                   a piston adapted to extend through an oval window when implanted in a human ear;  
4                   a pair of jaws for engaging an ossicle when implanted in a human ear;  
6                   a spring coupled to the jaws for biasing the jaws toward one another to provide  
clamping pressure, wherein the spring is integrally formed between the pair of jaws and is of a  
8                   flexible material different from a material of the jaws; and  
                 means for operatively connecting the jaws to the piston comprising a wire operatively  
                 connected to one of the jaws and to the piston.

2. (canceled)

3. (canceled)

4. (original) The middle ear prosthesis of claim 1 wherein each of the jaws  
2                   comprises a body having a semi-cylindrical inner surface.

5. (currently amended) The middle ear prosthesis of claim [[4]] 1 wherein the spring  
2                   comprises a pair of flexible support arms each operatively coupled to an associated one of the jaws  
                 is of silicon.

6. (currently amended) The middle ear prosthesis of claim [[5]] 1 wherein ~~each~~  
2 ~~support arm has one end received in an opening in the associated jaw and another end coupled to the~~  
~~piston the spring is of pliable plastic.~~

7. (currently amended) The middle ear prosthesis of claim 1 wherein ~~each support~~  
2 ~~arm has one end surrounding the body of the associated jaw and another end coupled to the piston~~  
~~the spring is integrally formed between the pair of jaws to define a C-shaped attachment mechanism.~~

8. (canceled)

9. (canceled)

10. (currently amended) The middle ear prosthesis of claim [[9]] 1 further  
2 comprising a second wire connected to the other jaw so that the wires can be squeezed together to  
open the jaws.

11. (canceled)

12. (original) The middle ear prosthesis of claim 1 wherein the spring is of a  
2 biocompatible material.

13. (canceled)

14. (original) The middle ear prosthesis of claim 1 wherein the piston is of a  
2 biocompatible material.

15. (original) The middle ear prosthesis of claim 1 wherein the piston is of a material  
2 selected from titanium or PTFE.

16. (original) The middle ear prosthesis of claim 1 wherein the jaws are of a  
2 bioactive material.

17. (original) The middle ear prosthesis of claim 1 wherein the jaws are of  
2 hydroxylapatite.

Claims 18 - 26 (canceled).

27. (original) A self crimping ossicular prosthesis comprising:

2 a piston adapted to extend through an oval window when implanted in a human ear;  
4 a pair of jaws of a bioactive material each comprising a body having a semi-  
cylindrical inner surface for engaging opposite sides of an ossicle when implanted in a human ear,  
to anchor to the ossicle;  
6 a spring element of a flexible material, different from the pair of jaws, integrally  
coupled to the jaws for biasing the jaws toward one another to provide clamping pressure; and  
8 a support arm operatively coupled to one of the jaws and to the piston.

28. (original) The self crimping ossicular prosthesis of claim 27 wherein the jaws  
2 are spaced apart with the semi-cylindrical inner surfaces facing one another, and the spring element  
is connected between the pair of bodies to define a substantially "C" shaped attachment mechanism.

29. (original) The self crimping ossicular prosthesis of claim 27 further comprising  
2 a second arm connected to the other jaw so that the arms can be squeezed together to open the jaws.

Claims 30 - 33 (canceled).